



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOATING LAW ADMINISTRATORS

PADDLESPORTS EDUCATION STANDARDS



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

In Consultation with the American Canoe Association

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Adapted from: American Camping Association. (1998). UAccreditation Standards for Camp Programs and Services. American Camping Association: Martinsville, IN.

Preamble

The purpose of these standards is to educate boating education professionals regarding the practices and procedures followed generally within the paddlesports community. That purpose is furthered to the extent that the standards provide a basis for approval of paddlesports education courses by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). It is not the intention of NASBLA to attempt to include every practice or procedure that might be desirable or implemented within a paddlesports education course since the conditions, facilities, and goals of all courses are not identical or uniform.

Standards Development

The National Boating Education Standards began as a guide for state, non-profit and commercial providers to follow in developing boating education materials. They were formally developed through a grant project in 1999 to prescribe the minimum body of knowledge necessary to effect safe, legal, and enjoyable boating. In addition, the standards were predicated on reducing risks in recreational boating based on empirical accident and boating violation statistics.

Although the National Boating Education Standards have been amended to include additional topics related to boating safety, the standards are primarily focused on the use of powered vessels. Manually propelled vessels like canoes and kayaks are mentioned in the standards, but the majority of the content is irrelevant to a paddler.

In 2006, a number of states began to look into requiring all vessel operators to pass a boating safety course. Other states had similar legislation with regards to powerboat operators, but there was a push to ensure that every person operating a boat on the waterways had been educated. Requiring a paddler to attend a 6-8 hour course which addressed mostly powered vessels did not seem fair. Therefore, a request was made for NASBLA to create a set of Paddlesports Education Standards.

The 2007 NASBLA Paddlesports Committee was charged with the task of drafting a set of standards with the help of the American Canoe Association. The National Boating Education Standards were used as a model for the creation of the Paddlesports Education Standards and the committee determined which of the standards were relevant to paddlers. The Paddlesports Education Standards are numbered in a similar fashion as the National Boating Education Standards, however, the letter “P” proceeds each standard number to denote that this is a Paddlesports Education Standard. The final version of the Paddlesports Education Standards was formally approved by the NASBLA membership on September 8, 2009 at their 49th Annual Conference.

Intended Audience

The Paddlesports Education Standards were developed for use by paddlesports education course instructors, paddlesports education text authors, and other paddlesports education professionals who intend to submit course materials for NASBLA review and approval. It is anticipated that this document will clearly communicate with prospective authors what must be included to provide a minimum standard of care, resulting in an efficient course review process.

Applicability and Definitions

The Paddlesports Education Standards apply to courses for operators of manually-propelled recreational boats such as canoes and kayaks. It is recognized that there are different types of boating courses with different target audiences. The National Boating Education Standards were written specifically for operators of powered vessels whereas the Paddlesports Education Standards identify the core topics that must be covered in paddlesports-focused courses.

The standards use the term, “course,” to refer to all components of a boating education course, including instruction, texts, supplemental materials, and tests. A boating course may be presented in various formats, including classroom instruction, home study, video, distance learning, CD-ROM, or any combination of these formats. “Boat” is used to refer to all types of recreational watercraft. “Paddlecraft” is used to refer to manually-propelled watercraft such as canoes and kayaks. It is expected that any unique words or terminology used in courses being submitted for approval will be clearly defined in the course materials.

Minimum Standards

These standards were intended to convey to organizations and individuals the **minimum body of knowledge that must be included in a short, 2-3 hour, paddlesports education course.** Instructors, text authors, paddlesports professionals, and organizations are encouraged to go beyond the standards when in their judgment and experience it assists the paddler to boat more safely. In addition, the standards are intended to show just the minimum content of the course materials, not the sequence or organization of the material. Although the standards are organized in a particular way, course/text developers are welcome to organize their information as they prefer.

Accuracy Requirement

It is mandatory that all information contained in course materials receiving NASBLA sanctioning be factually correct.

Standards Revision

Proposed revisions or additions to the Paddlesports Education Standards will be reviewed and considered by the NASBLA Education & Awareness Committee in the same manner as the National Boating Education Standards. Adoption of any changes must be approved by the NASBLA membership at their annual conference each year.

Required Materials for NASBLA Review

It is assumed that the standards will be met in various ways and that materials submitted to NASBLA may include course texts, supplemental texts, instructor guidelines or outlines, and handout materials. State-specific and localized information that is relevant to the particular course audience may be provided through any of these media (see standard 8.2 for the required content of this material). To assist in the determination of whether the standards are met, the complete set of application materials, including the final exam, UmustU be included in the package of materials submitted to NASBLA for review.

PADDLESPO RTS EDUCATION STANDARDS

The Boat

Standard P:1.1 – Boat Capacities

The course will describe how to determine acceptable loading capacity and how to properly balance the load.

Rationale – Overloading a small hand-powered boat or distributing the load improperly increases the likelihood of capsizing. While many capsize cause no injury, capsizing is a leading contributor to boating fatalities. If a boat does not have a capacity plate, refer to the owner’s manual, the manufacturer’s website, or call the company for capacity recommendations.

Standard P:1.2 – Boat Registration Requirements

The course will describe state-specific registration requirements, including:

1. Registration requirements, if any;
2. Requirements for hull identification number;
3. Requirements for registration documentation and external display of numbers;
4. Reciprocity regulations.

Rationale - There are no federal requirements for registration of canoes and kayaks. State laws regarding paddleboat registration vary, as do rules for launch permits and other requirements. Paddlers should be informed about the specific requirements in their state, and in states where they plan to take their boats. If a motor is added, rules for motorized craft apply, including registration.

Boating Equipment

Standard P:2.1 – Personal Flotation Device

The course will describe U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation devices appropriate for paddlesports and emphasize the importance of wearing a PFD while paddling due to the elevated risk of capsizing in a small boat. The course will also describe carriage requirements and the importance of maintaining PFDs in serviceable condition.

Rationale – U.S. Coast Guard statistics consistently show that at least 85% of the people who die in boating accidents were not wearing a PFD. It is particularly important for paddlers to wear a lifejacket because of the increased likelihood of capsizing. The course should emphasize the availability of comfortable, lightweight PFDs that lend themselves well to paddling activities, particularly Type III and Type V, and should inform paddlers to always check the label of any PFD for to determine its suitability for the intended activity.

Standard P:2.2 – Navigation Light Equipment

The course will cover the requirement to carry a flashlight and/or flare-up light for use at night and in periods of restricted visibility.

Rationale – Small boats can be difficult for those in bigger boats to see, especially at night. Paddlers should know the specific state requirements for the waters where they plan to boat.

Standard P:2.3 – Sound Signaling Equipment

The course will cover the advisability of carrying a whistle and, for certain waters, a foghorn.

Rationale – Sound signaling devices help paddlers summon help when needed, and can be used in conditions of low visibility to help prevent a collision by letting other boaters know where you are. Paddlers should know the specific state requirements for the waters where they plan to boat.

Standard P:2.4 – Visual distress signals

The course will describe the requirement for carrying visual distress signals such as a signal mirror and flares for signaling for help if applicable.

Rationale – Visual distress signals provide an effective means for paddlers to alert others of the need for assistance. Paddlers should know the specific state requirements for the waters where they plan to boat.

Trip Planning and Preparation

Standard P:3.1 – Checking Local Weather and Water Conditions

The course will describe how to make informed paddling decisions based on forecasted local weather and water conditions. It will also describe dangerous weather conditions such as strong winds, storms, lightning, hurricanes and fog and their importance in trip planning.

Rationale –Paddlers must be able to use weather information to make judgments about probable water conditions and decisions about whether to continue with the float plan. Often, poor weather in combination with other unexpected emergencies accelerates the danger to paddlers.

Standard P:3.2 – Checking Local Hazards

The course will describe how to obtain information about local hazards that may impede a paddling trip.

Rationale – A lack of understanding of local conditions can place paddlers in very dangerous situations. Low-head dams, rapids, strainers, currents, bridges, heavy boating traffic and tides can all cause serious paddling accidents and should be avoided. Open water hazards such as commercial shipping channels may not be obvious to inexperienced paddlers

Standard P:3.3 – Filing a Float Plan

The course will describe the importance of notifying someone of your boating plans and the basic information that should be included.

Rationale – In the event of an accident, rescue authorities can respond much faster and in a more focused way if a float plan has detailed information about the group, the paddlers' route, the planned destination, the time of departure and expected return, and a description of the boats in the group.

Standard P:3.4 – Preventative Maintenance

The course will communicate the need for regular inspection and maintenance of the boat and paddling equipment, including:

1. Inspecting the boat for water tightness, including the hull, gaskets, and hatch covers.

2. Patching holes with a material suited to the composition of the hull.
3. Cleaning the boat with plain water or a non-phosphate detergent.
4. Storing the boat off the ground and out of the sun.
5. Checking and tightening screws and deck fittings.
6. Treating the hull with an appropriate UV inhibitor if recommended by the manufacturer.
7. Checking flotation air bags to be sure they hold air.
8. Checking lines and grab handles for fraying.
9. Checking paddles for damage.

Rationale – Keeping your canoe or kayak in good condition can prevent leaks that could impede your trip. Particularly for sit-on-top boats, hull integrity and water tightness are crucial. Seams can fail, leading to leakage and dramatically affecting boat performance / flotation.

Standard P:3.5 – Transporting

The course will describe proper procedures for transporting a canoe or kayak on top of a car to prevent accidents and property damage, including:

1. Making sure the car top rack is strong and securely attached to the vehicle.
2. Cushioning the gunnels to avoid abrasion.
3. Using proper tie-downs and knots.
4. Positioning a vehicle at the take-out point for one-way trips.

Rationale – Most kayaks and canoes are transported to and from paddling venues on the top of a vehicle. Courses should emphasize that drivers are responsible for anything they attach to their car. Properly securing the boat to the car top is essential to prevent accidents. Paddlers should be urged to use bow and stern lines to attach the boat to the car, and lines perpendicular to the midline to attach the boat to the rack.

Standard P:3.6 - Pre-Departure Checklist and Passenger Communication

The course will describe the importance of using a pre-departure checklist and conducting a safety discussion with all in the paddling party. Hand signals should be reviewed. The skills of all paddlers in the group should be assessed as the route and pace are discussed. Gear should be secured in the boats to avoid loss in case of capsizing. The pre-departure checklist should help each paddler ensure that he/she:

1. Is wearing a lifejacket.
2. Has attached a whistle to the lifejacket.
3. Is wearing sunscreen and a visored hat or helmet.
4. Is properly dressed for the water temperature and conditions.

Rationale – Paddling in a group necessitates clear communication among the parties. Reviewing plans for the trip and safety precautions can reduce accidents and increase the efficiency of rescue operations in the event of an emergency.

Marine Environment

Standard P:4.1 – Environmental Laws and Regulations

The course will describe environmental laws and regulations regarding littering and will emphasize responsible practices such as “leave no trace,” avoidance of wildlife, and use of plain water or non-phosphate detergents as cleaning agents.

Rationale – Taking steps to protect the environment when paddling is important to safeguard people’s health, wildlife, and the water resource itself. Careless disposal of trash can ruin the aesthetic beauty of the area and allow birds and wildlife to become entangled in discarded fishing line, plastic rings and other refuse.

Safe Boat Operation

Standard P:5.1 - Operator Responsibilities

The course will describe a paddler’s ultimate responsibility for his or her personal safety, the safety of anyone else on board and all activity aboard the boat. This responsibility extends to other water users and includes but is not limited to: refraining from careless, reckless, or negligent operations on the water, abiding by other general boater courtesy, and observing and operating in accordance with homeland security measures.

Rationale – Paddling is safer in numbers. This ensures that someone will be available to help in the event of a mishap. However, it is every paddler’s responsibility to know their own skill level and to avoid weather or water conditions that are beyond their abilities. Paddlers should know and practice self-rescue techniques.

Standard P:5. 2 – Influence of Drugs and Alcohol on Boat Operation

The course will describe the effects of drinking alcohol or using drugs while boating and the boating laws pertinent to operating a boat while under the influence.

Rationale –It is illegal to operate a boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This is true of hand-powered craft like canoes and kayaks, as well as powerboats. Alcohol impairs balance and judgment, which are critical to avoiding capsizing in a small craft.

Standard P:5.3 – Navigation Rules

The course will assist the paddler in encountering typical navigational rules situations, including:

1. Paddling as close to shore as is safe, avoiding channels used by larger craft.
2. Crossing the channel as a group.
3. Avoiding collision with power craft by keeping a sharp lookout, using light and sound signals to identify your presence, and maneuvering out of the way.
4. Turning the bow into the wake of powerboats to help prevent capsizing.
5. Sharing water features such as eddies and rapids with other paddlers.
6. Observing and operating in accordance with homeland security measures by keeping a safe distance from military and commercial ships at sea and in port and observing all restrictions in security zones.
7. Rendering assistance to other paddlers in the event of a mishap, to the extent that you can do so without danger to yourself or your boat.
8. Disclaimer:

“The navigation rules contained in this course summarize basic navigation rules for which a paddler is responsible on inland waterways. Additional and more in-depth rules apply regarding various types of waterways, such as International Waters and Western Rivers, and operation in relation to powered vessels and other watercraft. It is the responsibility of a boat operator to know and follow all of the navigation rules. In those states that Inland Rules do not apply, the equivalent International, Western Rivers or Great Lakes rule(s) may be substituted by the Course Provider.”

“For a complete listing of the navigation rules, refer to the document “Navigation Rules of the Road” published by the U.S. Coast Guard (COMDTINST 16672.2 Series) and available through the U.S. Government printing office or on the web at <http://www.uscg.mil/vtm/navrules/navrules.pdf>. For State specific navigation requirements, refer to the state laws where you intend to boat.”

Rationale – On waterways that are shared by power craft and paddlers, paddlers are at greater risk because their boats are small and difficult to see. Paddlers should not assume that a powerboat operator sees them, much less that the powerboat can maneuver to avoid them. Paddlers must be alert to others on the water and take action to avoid them.

Standard P:5.4 – Aids to Navigation

The course will describe the U.S. Aids to Navigation (USATONS) as they are relevant to paddlers, including:

1. Understanding channel markers.
2. Understanding regulatory markers, such as those marking dams, submerged objects and other hazards, and homeland security restrictions.

Rationale – Aids to Navigation are the “road signs” of the water. They assist boaters in navigating safely from place to place. They are particularly useful to paddlers in identifying known hazards such as low-head dams and in marking channels used by larger boats.

Standard P:5.5 – Boarding, Exiting and Securing the Boat

The course will describe how to safely board and exit a paddlecraft, emphasizing the need to maintain three points of contact. For kayaks, the course also should address proper fit so that entry into and exit from the boat is not impeded. The course will explain how to secure the craft at the shore to prevent it from drifting away.

Rationale: Boarding and exiting a paddlecraft can be challenging, especially for novice paddlers. Securing the boat is an essential skill.

Emergency Preparedness

Standard P:6.1 – Rendering assistance

The course will describe methods of and tools for assisting a paddler in difficulty.

Rationale – Falling in the water is to be expected in paddlesports. Paddling in a group is highly recommended so that paddlers can assist one another in case of a capsize or a fall into the water. Every paddler should carry rescue equipment such as ropes and throw bags and should know how to use them properly. Paddlers should also know how to tow or “bulldoze” a swimmer.

Standard P:6.2 – Capsizing/Falls Overboard

The course will describe how to prevent and respond to these emergencies. The prevention recommendations will include at least the following: stay centered and low,

avoid standing and sudden moves, maintain three points of contact, never overload, balance your load, and avoid rough water. The responding procedures will include at least the following: wearing life jackets, taking a head count, staying with the craft when appropriate, signaling for assistance, using improvised floating aids, and initiation of procedures to recover people in the water.

Rationale – Capsizing and falls overboard emergencies are consistently the leading causes of boating fatalities. Overloading and passenger movement on smaller craft contribute to most of the capsizing/falls overboard accidents. This issue highlights the need for boater education courses to stress the proper response/action in a capsizing/ falls overboard emergency.

Standard P:6.3- Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia Prevention

The course will describe the dangers of cold-water immersion and hypothermia, including prevention, the physiological impact of cold-water immersion (initial reaction, short-term immersion/swimming failure, long-term immersion/immersion hypothermia, and post-rescue collapse), and treatment for hypothermia.

Rationale – Paddlers are at risk of dying when involved in a cold-water immersion accident. The body loses heat 25 times faster in cold water than in than cold air, and 35 times faster if the person is moving vigorously, as when swimming or struggling in the water. Sportsmen who hunt or fish from a canoe in cold weather should dress for both air and water temperatures, and be aware of movements that cause capsize or a fall over the side. If a person falls into the water, every effort should be made to rescue him/her as quickly as possible. The victim will most likely be unable to assist in his/her own rescue, so a plan should be in place for how to rescue someone who has fallen in the water. Paddlers should know how to recognize and treat hypothermia.

Standard P:6.4 - Heat-related Illnesses

The course will describe various illnesses that may result from overexertion in hot conditions, including heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat stroke as well as dehydration and water intoxication (excess water intake). The course will describe symptoms and treatment of these heat-related illnesses.

Rationale: Because they power their vessels through their own muscular effort, paddlers should be aware of the dangers of becoming overheated and know how to recognize and treat the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

Standard P:6.5- Accident Reports

The course will describe what kinds of boating accidents require an accident report as well as how, when and where to file the report.

Rationale – Accidents reports are legally required when the accident involves:

1. Loss of life;
2. Personal injury requiring medical attention beyond first aid;
3. Property damage beyond federal or state thresholds; or
4. Complete loss of the boat.

Paddlers should know and comply with the law regarding accident reporting, including being aware of where to send an accident report in the states in which they boat. Accident reports provide information that can assist boating safety professionals in identifying and addressing the most serious concerns to boater safety.

Standard P:6.6 – Boating Accident Report Form

The course will include a sample accident report form, which can be included in the textbook or as a separate handout.

Rationale – U.S. Coast Guard reports indicate that only five to ten percent of non-fatal boating accidents are reported. Every effort to assist boaters to report accidents may increase compliance with the reporting requirements.

Other Water Activities

Standard P:7.1 – Hunting and Fishing

The course will inform people who hunt and fish from hand-powered boats that they are paddlers and need to follow safe paddling practices. Information must be provided about accident risks relevant to this group of paddlers.

Rationale – According to a study by the American Canoe Association, roughly half of those killed in a canoeing or kayaking accident (1996-2002) were fishing at the time the accident occurred. More hunters die each year from drowning and the effects of cold-water immersion than from gunshot wounds. Many accidents occur when a hunter reaches for a decoy, an angler leans over the gunnels for a fish, a person falls over the side while standing up, or a boat capsizes from an unbalanced load. An excited hunting dog can also unbalance the load and capsize a small canoe.

State-Specific Boating Information

Standard P:8.1 – Continuing Education

The course will outline the need for additional education on boating safety and paddling skills, including in-the-water instruction, and for staying informed of changes in boating safety requirements.

Rationale – Each type of paddlecraft handles differently. It is important for paddlers to become skillful at handling their boat and to understand their responsibility to keep up with new developments in boating laws and safety information. Boating equipment and safety information is constantly changing and improving. Paddlers who stay abreast of these developments will improve their own paddling enjoyment and the safety of all boating participants. Paddlers who add a sail or motor to their boat will need to be familiar with requirements for those types of vessels.

Standard P:8.2 – State-Specific Boating Information

The course will contain, as part of the text or as a separate handout, state-specific information in regard to boating laws and regulations, and local boating conditions. The course will include as applicable:

- P:8.2.1 – registration and titling requirements, including number of years registration decals are valid, expiration date of registration, decal placement;
- P:8.2.2 – laws for required wearing of PFDs for children and/or for certain types of boats;
- P:8.2.3 – additional equipment requirements such as bailing devices, distress signals, lights;
- (P:8.2.4 was intentionally omitted)*
- P:8.2.5 – litter laws;
- P:8.2.6 – requirements for mandatory education, licensing, rental operations, and proficiency test certifications;
- P:8.2.7- adult supervision requirements for children;
- P:8.2.8 – laws for unsafe, reckless or negligent behavior
- P:8.2.9 – boat operations in restricted zones;
- P:8.2.10- paddling under the influence, implied consent, and BAC levels;
- P:8.2.11- law enforcement authority and obligation of paddlers to comply;
- P:8.2.12- boat accident reporting requirements;
- P:8.2.13- state approved boating accident report form;
- P:8.2.14- other laws/regulations by the state boating regulator.

Rationale – Although course materials intended for national distribution do not need to include state-specific information, it is assumed that sponsoring boating organizations have procedures in place to assure that instructors provide supplemental materials and instruction to meet the intent of this requirement.

Course Format and Testing Requirements

Standard P:9.1 – Boat Operator Knowledge Course Formats

The course may be submitted for NASBLA review in any format that meets the standards as long as it can be easily reviewed. Courses may include classroom instruction, distance learning or self-study programs. However, paddling knowledge courses are best offered in conjunction with paddling skill courses on the water.

Rationale: It is important for paddlers to understand both basic boating safety and the safe handling of their craft. The American Canoe Association's review of U.S. Coast Guard accident descriptions indicates that a large portion of those killed in canoe or kayak accidents had little or no paddling experience, lacked fundamental paddling skills, and were unaware of boating safety messages.

Standard P:9.2 – Boat Operator Knowledge Exams

In order to receive NASBLA sanctioning, all exams must be submitted for review, whether administered as part of a course of study or as an independent exam.

P:9.2.1 – The exam must be well designed and comprehensive in covering NASBLA's standards for paddlesports.

Rationale: The exam should measure paddler knowledge equally well regardless of how the knowledge was obtained.

P:9.2.2 – Each exam submitted for review must be accompanied with a plan that explains how the test administrator will seek to maintain exam integrity. The plan must address security issues commensurate with the purpose of the test and perceived opportunity to commit exam fraud.

Rationale: Test security should be appropriate for the exam purpose. Measures associated with exams conducted for NASBLA-approved general boating education may be included as necessary.

P:9.2.3 – The exam must be well-designed and comprehensive. The NASBLA testing standards relevant to paddlesports exams are:

TESTING STANDARD P:1

Paddlesports examinations should comply with the test construction guidance for NASBLA-approved general boating safety examinations.

TESTING STANDARD P:2

Each test item must be documented in at least one reference from the following list:

Recognized Reference List for Paddlesports Exam Items

1. Navigation Rules (U.S. Coast Guard)
2. Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreation Boats (U.S. Coast Guard)
3. 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
4. Boating Safety Circulars (U.S. Coast Guard)
5. ATSM Standard F1739-96 “Standard Guide for Performance of a Water Rescuer”
6. Boating Accident Statistics and Reports (U.S. Coast Guard)
7. Information contained on U.S. Coast Guard web site, in particular Office of Boating Safety
8. America’s Boating Course
9. Canoeing and Kayaking (American Red Cross)
10. Canoeing and Kayaking (American Canoe Association, adapted from Ohio Department of Natural Resources)
11. Essentials of Kayak Touring (American Canoe Association)
12. Essentials of River Kayaking (American Canoe Association)
13. Introduction to Paddling: Canoeing Basics for Lakes and Rivers (American Canoe Association)
14. Paddle Safe, Paddle Smart brochure series (American Canoe Association) - includes: Paddler's Safety Checklist, Cold Water Survival, Practices Ethics and Conduct, River Paddler's Guide to Rescue, Rules of the Road & Wear It! Life Jackets Matter
15. American Canoe Association Instructor's Manual (American Canoe Association)
16. SmartStart for Paddlers Presentation Kit (American Canoe Association)

TESTING STANDARD P:3

The examination shall consist of 30 questions, 25 of which cover Standards P:1 through P:7 and five additional questions to cover the state-specific requirements (Standard P:8).

Standard P:1 – 5% or 1-2 questions
Standard P:2 – 15% or 3-4 questions
Standard P:3 – 20% or 5-6 questions
Standard P:4 – 5% or 1-2 questions
Standard P:5 – 25% or 7-8 questions
Standard P:6 – 25% or 7-8 questions
Standard P:7 – 5% or 1-2 questions
Standard P:8 – 5 additional questions

Recommended Boating Safety Information

The following items contain recommended course content but are not considered part of the minimum standards for boater education courses.

P:R1 – Boat Types and Uses

The course should describe the common types of recreational paddlecraft and their performance in various types of boating situations.

Rationale - Boat operators should understand the handling characteristics of various boat types so as to match the boat to the water and planned activity. Boat performance characteristics as determined by design features should be known to a boat operator and factored into their boating decisions.

P:R2 - Boating Terms

The course should describe commonly used boating terms relative to paddlers in addition to those terms required to follow the Navigation Rules. (see also standard P:5.3).

Rationale - Knowing common boating terms could save time and confusion in the event of an emergency by enabling boat operators to secure the situation efficiently and communicate clearly.